

NEWS RELEASE

**FROM: Catherine L. Hanaway
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TENNESSEE MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF A FIREARM

November 13, 2007

A Tennessee man pled guilty today to unlawful possession of a firearm, announced United States Attorney Catherine L. Hanaway.

GERALD BYARS, age 32, of Brownsville, Tennessee, pled guilty to one felony count of being a previously convicted felon in possession of a firearm. He appeared before United States District Judge Catherine D. Perry.

On August 3, 2007, Gerald Byars was the driver of a vehicle stopped for speeding on Interstate 55 in Perry County, Missouri. The officer conducting the stop searched Mr. Byars' vehicle and found a loaded Smith and Wesson, 9mm pistol in the center console. The passenger of the vehicle was interviewed and told the officer that the pistol belonged to Mr. Byars and that

Byars had retrieved it from a house in Memphis, Tennessee shortly they left on their trip to Illinois.

Due to Byars' previous felony convictions, he is prohibited from possessing firearms and now faces a maximum punishment of 10 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. Sentencing has been set for February 11, 2008.

Hanaway praised the Perry County Sheriff's Office and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives for their work on the case. Assistant United States Attorney Keith D. Sorrell handled the prosecution for the Government.